



Harlaxton Parish Council

Chair: Andrew Cartlidge

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Parish Council Meeting 7:30pm on Wednesday, 28 August 2024 Harlaxton Village Hall, 3 Church Street, Harlaxton, NG32 1HU

Minutes

1. Meeting Opened: 19:30
2. In Attendance: Cllr Wicks, Smith, Phillips, Clawson & Cartlidge
3. Apologies (Non-Attendance): Cllr Gabriel
4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interests: Cllr Cartlidge acknowledged that the business he works for is one of the sponsors of Harlaxton Cricket Club
5. Resolution to approve minutes of Parish Council Meetings: PCM 24 July 2024: Agreed unanimously.
6. Public Forum (15 Minute Presentation/Discussion): A representative of the Cricket Club spoke about the grass cutting around the Sports Field etc and explained that they have had a difficult time with a succession of broken machines and significant unexpected costs to repair and maintain. They advised that they remain keen to cut the grass in 2025 and have plans to obtain a newer machine before the new season. They explained that if they're unable to purchase a new machine, the Cricket Club is likely to fold because they'll have no means of maintaining their pitch.
7. Updates - County Councillor, District Councillor, Police & Crime: None
8. Updates and Discussions
 - 8.1. Finance Update: Bank funds remain healthy with no other outgoings since June. The VAT reimbursement is pending. There are a number of invoices to agree payment on today.
 - 8.1.1. AGAR Completion: The completion certificate has been received. It was agreed that this will be published as required.
 - 8.1.2. Internal Audit Donation: The internal audit was completed in May at no charge. The Council usually offers a donation to the auditors chosen charity. This has been £50 for many years. It was agreed to increase this to £75 this year. A letter of thanks will be set to the internal auditor.
 - 8.1.3. Invoices/Expenses received. The following invoices were presented and approved for payment: PKF Littlejohn [external audit], £252 inc VAT. Irvin Metcalf [Grass cutting of the A607 verge adj the Millennium sign], £300. Irvin Metcalf [clearing the Coopers Plantation ditch], £70. BDG Mowing [Grass cutting], £380. LALC [website management], £216 inc VAT, HCC [Sports Field, Play Area and front of HSSC mowing], £200. Link Magazine [distribution of village voice], £21.23 inc VAT, RoSPA [Play Area Inspection Report], £112.80 inc VAT, Maplebeck Tree Care Ltd [Village Tree Survey Report], £450. ARC Groundworks [channel drain to rear of HSSC building], agreed to pay £1225 holding £500 until defects made good,
 - 8.2. Proposed Development off Swine Hill: No further update
 - 8.3. HPC Bins around the Village: The community cleaner provided a verbal report and advised that they are emptying the four bins once a week, and sometimes twice a week for those on Manor Drive and adjacent to the A607. They often find that the bins on Manor Drive and the Play Area are full quickly, often with food packaging, drink cans, and bottles. The size of the Manor Drive bin was discussed, along with the absence of a bin near the public footpath on Rectory Drive/West End. Online research was done. It was agreed to purchase a larger metal bin for Manor Drive [budget set at £500 + VAT] and to move the current bin to Rectory Drive/West End.
 - 8.4. Traffic
 - 8.4.1. A607 Consultation: Harlaxton PC has responded in support of the reduction from 50mph to 40mph, and made recommendations that the 40mph zone is slightly increased to include the footpath across the road to the west, and to encompass the Manor's planning approved access to the east. However, LCC has replied that these amendments "do not meet their criteria". Councillors were appalled at this blatant disregard for this minor change that would help future-proof village issues. It was agreed to reply to LCC and request full details of what criteria they refer to. The issue has already been raised for Cllr Vernon to follow up, and it was agreed to involve MP Gareth Davies.
 - 8.4.2. SID (Speed Indicator Device): Currently facing south on The Drift, the 85% speed continues to be 35mph, although the fastest was 60mph.

- 8.4.3. CSW (Community Speed Watch): The first meeting of the Harlaxton CSW Working Party is scheduled for Tuesday, 3 September, at 7pm in the VH Committee Room.
- 8.5. LCC Highway Gully Cleansing: Councillors reported that LCC's un-notified road closures caused chaos around the village and seemed excessively over the top for the limited hours which the cleansing contractor worked, which seemed to be between 11am and 1pm; the signs then often being abandoned with road closures in place overnight. Councillors expressed concern about what work was carried out, since many road gulleys don't seem to have been opened up, with grass still growing around them. Councillors agreed to carry out another gully survey and report back to LCC. LCC responded to previous concerns that Swine Hill and the A607 were part of the cleansing work, saying that the other roads are in phase 2 and the full Harlaxton drainage cleansing will be completed this year.
- 8.6. Anglian Water work on the High Street: No current update. HPC to follow up. Cllr Phillips to ask an adjacent neighbour for permission to inspect the culvert under the road from their inspection chamber.
9. Village Events
 - 9.1. Village Fayre, 31 August 2024: Cllr Smith reported that the preparations are going well. The Marquee is to be erected on Friday. It was noted that the PC has previously offered to cover £100 of the marketing for the event and expects to receive an expenses claim accordingly.
10. HSSC
 - 10.1. Car Park and Manor Drive Flooding: Our complaint that AXA/Crawford has been slow to progress with the Claim has been upheld, and a cheque for £50 has been received in compensation. With regard to the wider claim matter, there is currently no further update following the attendance of Allied Solutions for Crawford and the submission of the expert letters in support of HPC's Claim. HPC to follow up.
 - 10.2. Channel Drain to the rear/south of HSSC: Councillors expressed disappointment in the quality of the workmanship. Some defects were noted on Friday, 23 September, before the contractor left, which were corrected over the weekend. However, other defects and poor workmanship were discovered on the afternoon of Wednesday, 28 September. The contractor has been notified that a retention of £500 will be held until the remedial work is complete.
11. Sports Field
 - 11.1. Playing Area Equipment. Latest inspection report (Cllr Wicks) [RoSpa inspection August 2024]: Cllr Wicks reported that minor maintenance is ongoing.
 - 11.2. Drainage/Maintenance: The contractor has advised that they will carry out the work in September, and will avoid the scheduled Cricket matches. HPC to follow up to firm up on a start date.
12. Grass Cutting, Hedges, etc
 - 12.1. Village Tree Survey: Cllr Phillips is reading through the detailed report and will update Councillors on a suggested tree work schedule at the next PCM. With regard to the fallen branch on the edge of Coopers Plantation, two contractors have met with councillors, and one has provided a report [no charge] and a quote. Another contractor has self-attended and provided a verbal quote. A written quote is to be requested. To deal with the fallen branch, remedial work to the damaged tree, the damage to the adjacent tree, and maintenance work to the overhanging branch over the playing field near the HCC containers, it was agreed to set at budget of £2500 + VAT.
 - 12.2. Gregory Close Maple: With two quotes received, it was agreed to set a budget of £550 + VAT unless a cheaper quote can be obtained.
 - 12.3. Hedge Cutting: Only one quote has been received, with two others pending. Three contractors have replied that they either no longer do hedge cutting, or they no longer work in this area. It was agreed to set a budget of £500 + VAT and adopt the one quote unless a cheaper one can be obtained by Friday, 20 September.
 - 12.4. HPC Grass Cutting, Coffin Walk & LCC Verge on A607: The grass cutting is usually quoted on a yearly basis. However, for the Manor Drive Sports Field and adjacent areas, a request for a quote on a multi-year term of 3 to 5 years has been received. It was questioned whether the Parish Council can enter into such an agreement, which may exceed the term of the current Councillors. Enquiries are to be made to SKDC and LALC for further advice. Subject to the PC's ability to enter into such a contract, a draft multi-year contract will be prepared for Councillors and shared for comments and development. It was agreed that Coffin Walk could be included in a future contract, but only 1 cut every 8 weeks and to maintain the footpath only, not to cut back to the ground.
13. South Kesteven Community Awards: It was agreed that Irvin and Pam Metcalf should be put forward for their many years of work, which is still ongoing, to support the village by litter picking along the A607 and previously for cutting the A607 verges.
14. Village Voice: Cllr Wicks will write the next edition's introduction, due in December/January.
15. Any other business: Cllr Cartlidge asked if the PC would support him in formal training to become a qualified Clerk. Subject to agreeing costs in due course, this was agreed. Cllr Cartlidge reminded Councillors that a Councillor, who carries out the Clerk's job, is unpaid; only an Independent Clerk is paid.
16. Next scheduled Meeting: Annual Meeting of the Council: Wednesday, 25 September 2024 at 7:30pm
17. Meeting close: 21:50